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ABSTRACT

The speed at which transformations have occurred in levels of knowledge--especially scientific and technical knowledge--obliges countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region to undergo a rapid process of modernization. An educational project of UNESCO was established with this goal in mind. This bulletin presents three articles concerning the project: (1) "The Major Project in the Field of Education in Central America; Advances, Limitations and Priorities for Action in the Future"; (2) "System of Statistical Information to Support the Planning, Operation, Monitoring and Evaluation of Ecuador's Literacy Programme"; and (3) "The Creation of Alphabets: An Interdisciplinary Task." The first article summarizes exploratory studies on the possibilities for achieving the project's objectives for literacy programs. The second article reviews the progress made in Ecuador in the field of statistical information in formal and basic education. The project recognizes the importance of the statistics for planning and evaluation of the programs in the region. The third article emphasizes the inclusion of vernacular languages in the teaching-learning process to meet the socio-cultural and linguistic realities of the different population groups. It is recommended that all factors--linguistic, socio-linguistic, educational--be taken into consideration in developing a unified alphabet. The last section of the bulletin gives a summary of activities of the networks of cooperation, which constitute an action instrument for achieving the project's objectives. A bibliography is included. (SM)

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bulletin

THE MAJOR PROJECT IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

In The Latin American and Caribbean Region

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The Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean has resulted from a consensus on the part of government representatives of the countries of the region concerning the necessity for a renewed, intensive and sustained effort to make good deficiencies and to meet unsatisfied basic educational needs between now and the year 2000, as a prerequisite for the development of those countries in line with objectives shared by all. In carrying out the necessary activities, each country's own efforts are to be seconded by inter-country, subregional, regional and international co-operation.

THE MAJOR PROJECT IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

In Latin America and the Caribbean

SUMMARY

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BULLETIN 9

Santiago, Chile, April 1986

Signed articles express the opinions of their authors which are not necessarily those of Unesco.

PRESENTATION

The Second Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Regional Committee for the Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean will be held in the first half of 1987.

The provisional agenda for this meeting provides for the discussion of a significant number of issues and problems: progress made in carrying out the Project, the specific objectives to be achieved in the period 1987-1989, and the guidelines for regional, sub-regional and international co-operation in this field. This discussion will take place in a context which is significantly different from that which existed at the time that the Major Project was drawn up. On the one hand, the financial crisis created by the high level of foreign debt has produced a situation in which resources are extremely limited. But on the other hand, the speed at which transformations have occurred in levels of knowledge, and especially scientific and technical knowledge, obliges countries in the region to undergo a rapid process of modernization, within the framework of their own cultural identities and characteristics.

The legacies of the past (illiteracy, failure and school drop-out) are added to the challenges of the future (the incorporation of scientific and technical advances, improvements in quality, etc.). Within this context, the Meeting of the Committee will be extremely important and will have great responsibility.

This issue of the Bulletin is designed to provide some contributions to an analysis of the areas referred to above. Firstly, and bearing in mind that Central America is a sub-region with specific characteristics, both in terms of its problems and the progress made or solutions found, an interesting comparative study has been included concerning the situation in the sub-region in

relation to the objectives of the Major Project which should be extremely useful in defining measures of co-operation at all levels. The second article is a proposal for improvements in the systems of statistics relating to literacy and adult education. The introduction of this improved system in Ecuador will make it possible to evaluate the effectiveness of the system and subsequently transfer it to similar regions.

Finally, this issue includes a study on the unification of native linguistic codes, which has important consequences for educational activities. The last section of the Bulletin gives a news summary of the activities of the networks of co-operation, which indicates the potential of this mechanism as an effective instrument of action for achieving the objectives of the Major Project.

THE MAJOR PROJECT IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: ADVANCES, LIMITATIONS AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION IN THE FUTURE

Unesco's Sub-regional Education Office for Central America and Panama

This article has been drawn up on the basis of exploratory studies carried out in each of the countries in the sub-region on the possibilities of achieving the objectives of the Major Project in the Field of Education.

During the first few months of 1986 the first stage was completed in the elaboration of a series of exploratory studies on the possibilities of achieving the objectives of the Major Project in the Field of Education in the countries in the Central America sub-region. The aim of these studies, which were carried out by Unesco's Sub-regional Education Office for Central America and Panama with the collaboration of specialists employed in the framework of the Regional UNDP/Unesco Project, RLA/83/012, "Support for literacy and adult education activities", is to support the countries in the area in drawing up policies and strategies and in introducing measures designed to further strengthen the progress made in relation to the three objectives of the Major Project in the Field of Education. The preliminary results of these studies, which analyze the efforts made by the countries of the isthmus in the field of education and which identify the main tendencies and present a series of proposals and alternative measures to be taken to achieve the objectives of the Major Project, are of particular interest in that they provide an overview and a critical vision of education in the Central American region.

The following summary of the situation in the Central American isthmus has been drawn up on the basis of the studies carried out in each of the countries in the sub-region, and presents the most important results which give an idea of the projects, limitations and priorities for future action in Central America in the context of the Major Project in the Field of Education.

Principal characteristics of the context

The international economic crisis has affected all the countries in the sub-region with more or with less intensity. In this respect, almost all of them have seen reductions in the rate of growth of their economies, and in their levels of private and public investment. In some countries this has meant negative rates of growth and a slow recuperation; in others there has been a stagnation in growth. But in all the countries, the consequences of the crisis have been a reduction in the resources for spending on education, the impossibility of creating employment, and the emergence of an "informal" sector of the economy which is assuming vast dimensions and whose effects cannot be foreseen.

In the sub-region as a whole, poverty, as a phenomenon which is generalized among vast sectors of the population, is a characteristic which we cannot fail to mention. Expressed

in terms of low per capita incomes, movements of people migrating from the countryside to the cities in search of higher incomes, a low level of participation in production and consumption, and poor indexes for education, health and housing, poverty is a factor which conditions in different ways the participation of sectors living in poverty in development programmes which seek to overcome this situation.

It is worth noting that the economic crisis is aggravated by the serious social tensions and conflicts which exist in some countries in the area, and whose consequences for the stability of the sub-region in particular, and the region as a whole, are severe. This situation has an important effect on the social and economic development of these countries, hampering efforts to plan development for the medium and long-term, and interfering to various degrees and with different consequences in the implementation of programmes, projects and activities. The context of the countries' educational activities is also one in which groups with ethnic and cultural differences co-exist, this being particularly significant in countries like Guatemala, Honduras and Panama; where new groups have emerged within the population as a result of the armed conflict, such as refugees and displaced persons; and where women have been ignored, especially in rural areas, and have been prevented from participating in social and economic terms in processes of development.

Turning to the field of education specifically, we find growing financial difficulties in almost all the nations of Central America, which are the result of the policies of austerity in public spending introduced in order to deal with the economic crisis.

Between 1980 and 1984 the percentage of GNP allocated to education in Costa Rica fell from 8.5% to 6%. In El Salvador, education's share of public spending has been decreasing, particularly since 1980; this share varied between 20 and 30% in the 1970s: in 1980 it was only 13%. In Guatemala, the Ministry of Education has seen a progressive reduction in its share of the total State budget, from 15% in 1973 to 11% in 1982; since 1983 there has been a slight recuperation, with the share increasing to 13% in 1985. Panama has also shown a downward trend in this respect; between 1975 and 1982 this share fell from 21.6 to 11.4%, subsequenily rising to 12%. In Nicaragua, education's share of GNP has increased notably, going from 2.5% in 1978, to 4.54% in 1982; however, since 1984 the armed conflict has resulted in significant restrictions being imposed. In Honduras, on the other hand, the budget of the Ministry of Education has risen from 3.4% of GNP in 1980 to 4.1% in 1983. In general the consequences of this situation can be seen in the freezing of or reduction in public spending on educational infrastructure and materials, and on training, supervision and support for educational innovations, as well as a reduction in the real incomes of teaching, technical and administrative staff in the education sector in a majority of the countries.

Length of schooling and improvements in the quality of education

Within a context of sustained growth in the population (the average annual rate of growth in Central America as a whole between 1970 and 1985 has been 2.8%) the countries of the sub-region have made significant efforts to increase or consolidate the coverage of their pre-school and general basic education services. In Costa Rica, in the period 1970-1985, pre-school education grew at an annual rate of 11.1%, and the country's net levels of schooling are among the highest in the whole of the Latin American region. In Panama in 1984 enrollment in pre-school education tripled, although this increase was basically concentrated in urban areas, and this country also has one of the highest gross levels of school attendance for the population between 6 and 15 years of age in the sub-region (95% in 1980). In Honduras pre-primary education services were in 1984 almost three times more extensive than in 1975, although this growth has occurred almost entirely in urban areas; furthermore, the major efforts which have been made to extend primary education services in this country in recent years have produced notable improvements in both net and gross rates of school attendance.

Despite the advances referred to, the deficit in coverage of general basic education services is still a very real problem for countries like Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. In Nicaragua, in spite of the spectacular growth in pre-school and primary enrollment observed in the period 1978-1984 (from 9.000 to

60.557; and from 369.640 to 534.317, respectively), it is calculated that more than 100.000 children in the 7-12 age group did not attend school in 1983; moreover, enrollment in primary school in 1984 is slightly lower than the level reached in 1983, probably as a result of the armed conflicts which are hampering the activities of schools, or causing their closure. In El Salvador during 1984, more than 350.000 children, out of a total of 879.540 in the 6-11 age group, did not attend school; between 1979 and 1984, initial enrollment in basic education has seen a significant reduction, and it is calculated that in 1986 this could fall to the level prevailing in 1979. In Guatemala all the evidence suggests that even if the greatest efforts are made, approximately 600.000 children will not go to school in the next three or four years, the major problem being concentrated in rural areas inhabited by different indigenous groups.

In terms of the attainment of the first objective of the Major Project in the Field of Education by the proposed deadline of the year 2000, the different levels of schooling found in the countries of the sub-region mean that there are distinct challenges to be faced. In a first group of countries, which includes Costa Rica, Panama and Honduras, it would seem possible to achieve the goal of general basic education for the entire school-aged population. In Costa Rica, this would imply that the first and second cycles of general basic education (1st-6th grades) would need to grow at an average rate of 1.7% over the next 15 years, while at the third cycle (7th-9th grades) the places available would need to increase at an average annual rate of 9%, which means an extensive programme of investment in infrastructure and teaching staff.

In Panama in order to meet the educational demand at the primary level (1st-6th grades) and the first cycle of secondary education (7th-9th grades), the current budget would need to grow by an average of 1.5% annually, with important efforts being made to cover the deficit in the gross levels of school attendance between the ages of 12 and 14 years (37% in 1984) and the serious deficiencies in educational infrastructure.

In Honduras, the tendency towards an improvement in the gross/net rates of school attendance for the population between 7-12 years of age (primary education) and between 13-15 years (secondary education) and the sustained growth that has occurred, puts the country in a position to generalize its primary education services before the end of the century, and achieve a coverage of nearly 50% in secondary education; this will demand a considerable expansion in secondary education services and a notable reduction in the rates of repetition, school drop-out and students who are many years behind their age group.

In contrast with the first group of countries, where the situation makes it important to give priority to actions particularly at the level of the 7th-9th grades of general basic education and directed towards the population in this age group, in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, priority must be given to measures aimed at extending the coverage of the first four grades of primary education because of the severe deficits that still exist in this area. Nicaragua will effectively need to arrest the notorious decline in the coverage of the education system which has occurred over the past three years, and achieve an annual rate of growth in secondary education twice that for the period 1978-1982; furthermore, the country will need to significantly reduce the rates recorded in 1983 for scholl drop-out (almost 50% of pupils repeat between the first and second grades: the majority of these drop out of school) and repetition of years (between 30 and 40% of students enrolled in primary school were more than two years behind their age group).

In El Salvador, in order to more fully meet the demand for general basic education, the average annual rate of growth over the next 15 years will need to be faster than the rate achieved from 1970-1980, and will need to be five times higher than that for the 1980-1984 period; there must also be a considerable reduction in the high rates of school drop-out and repetition found in the first two grades of primary education (9.2% of students drop out, and 16% repeat, according to figures for 1982).

Finally, Guatemala will need to achieve an annual rate of growth over the next 15 years 25% higher than the average obtained since 1970, if it is to meet the demand for basic education, and the annual rate of growth in secondary education must be three times higher than that registered over the past 15 years; the fact that the majority of the population is made up of indigenous groups living

in rural areas, and the deficit in coverage and high rates of repetition and school drop-out found among these groups in particular, demand appropriate measures, sustained support and a complete reorientation of the educational services offered.

As we have indicated, problems such as the acute socio-economic crisis, the increase in situations of conflict, the worsening in the conditions of living of the population and the reduction in the budget allocated to education, have in one way or another prevented the extension and improvement of educational services. However, in relation to the third objective of the Major Project in the Field of Education, there are also some limitations which are produced by the education systems themselves, and which need to be dealt with if the quality and efficiency of education is to be improved. At the sub-regional level, there would appear to be three problems which need to be accorded priority: the excessive centralization and bureaucracy in the administration, planning and management of the educational process; the rigidity of the curriculum, with the same plans and programmes being used in general basic education throughout the country; and the essentially urban orientation seen in education, in terms both of levels of provision and contents, to the detriment of rural areas.

In recent years important progress has been observed in countries in the area in relation to the decentralization, regionalization and the dispersion of educational services, and there have been some experiments in creating educational nuclei in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. In Nicaragua the process of regionalization which was initiated in 1982 has resulted in 9 Educational Regions, 104 zones and 24 educational nuclei being established up to 1985. Different measures to regionalize education or reform administrative procedures have been carried out in countries like Costa Rica, Panama and Honduras, while Guatemala's new constitution (1986) establishes that the administration of the educational system should be decentralized and regionally-based (Article 76). In general, the efforts to modernize organizational structures often lack a global perspective, and there has been little regionalization of administration, with the result that educational establishments do not receive adequate, and still less efficient, technical advice and logistic support. The break with the traditional centralization of the educational system in countries in this area would appear to be the major challenge to be met before the end of the century. This process will depend on the administration becoming more open to local initiatives and sustained by them, in order to guarantee that the decisions taken are more realistic and appropriate to the characteristics and interests of the population. At the same time, regionalization should mean the transfer of the necessary resources and sufficient autonomy in decision-making to ensure a basic degree of efficiency in the services, as well as the transfer of some areas of administration, including curricula, teacher training, the administration of staff, educational consultancy and supervision. It is felt that all the countries in the sub-region should make significant efforts in this direction, and that they will need a high level of support from international co-operation.

Important strategic efforts are also being made in fields such as school meals (which are generally available, or are provided in parts of all the countries), the provision of school books at the primary level (in Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and, in an experimental form, in El Salvador), and the distribution to students of shoes, and in some groups uniforms (Costa Rica); furthermore, technical and financial co-operation have helped to compensate for deficits in the budgets allocated to some areas of education. However in the coming years it will be necessary to take measures to optimize the use of existing resources (re-ordering the budget), to make the best use of international co-operation (selective support in priority areas) and to maintain community participation in the management and financing of education, through planning mechanisms which prevent measures being duplicated. Given the serious deficits in coverage already referred to, countries like Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and, to some extent, Honduras, will need to initiate new actions to develop forms of education not based in school, or only partially based in schools, and to guarantee adequate levels of efficiency and quality, especially in the first four grades of general basic education. On the other hand, countries like Costa Rica, Panama, and again, Honduras, need to improve their levels of quality and efficiency, particularly at the third cycle of general basic education (7th-9th

grades, or the first cycle of secondary education). The experiences carried out in recent years in the sub-region also demonstrate that it is wise to deal with illiteracy at the same time as repetition and school drop-out at the level of basic education; thus, efforts should be made to introduce projects based on integral approaches and combine provisions for pre-school, primary and adult education in all the countries in the area, and especially those where there is still a high proportion of illiteracy.

One aspect of the quality of education is the curriculum, in relation to which we find that in general there is still a basically passive, mechanical and fragmentary view of the teaching process, aimed at teaching out of date information with little relation between one area and another, rather than at encouraging a continual, unifying and active recreation of information on the part of the learner. On the other hand, the introduction of new elements to bring the curriculum up to date (population studies, environmental studies, scientific advances, food and hygiene, and labour education, among others) would appear to have over-burdened courses and programmes, instead of leading to a balanced review of the structure and content of the curriculum. In the countries of the sub-region many efforts have been made to deal with these problems. In Costa Rica, within the context of the Programme for the Qualitative Improvement of Education, the conceptual norms, operational framework and the main lines of the curriculum have been drawn up, as a basis on which to structure programmes of study; these would appear to be flexible enough to allow a horizontal articulation of the different elements in the curriculum in the field. In El Salvador, work is in progress to make it possible to introduce far-reaching reforms in the curriculum, while in Nicaragua there have recently been a number of experiments in introducing a flexible curriculum. In Panama, following the repeal of the Education Reform in 1979, a new Education Law is needed, to give coherence and an organic character to the measures carried out in recent years. In Honduras, various attempts have been made to deal with the deficiencies that have been observed, such as the introduction of the Programme to Improve Rural Primary Education between 1978-1982.

Nevertheless, in the majority of the countries it is recognized that there is a lack of sustained educational support at the regional and local level, of effective mechanisms to assist teachers to adapt the curriculum, as well as an inadequate level of training to enable teachers to identify within the classroom the needs of their students and the resources available in the local environment which could be used in the teaching-learning process.

Special reference needs to be made to the question of education in groups whose members have cultural and linguistic differences, particularly in a country like Guatemala (almost 50% of whose population is indigenous), where the possibilities of updating the curriculum must be seen within the context of a progressive consolidation of an inter-cultural and bilingual system of education. In Central America, where there are about 4,000,000 indigenous people, a number of advances have been made in this sphere in recent years, and educational projects which are bilingual (involving the use of the student's mother-tongue, as well as the official language) and inter-culture (allowing for elements of the culture characteristic of the area in which the student lives to be introduced into the teaching process) have begun to be carried out. In Guatemala, a National Programme for Bilingual Education was introduced in 1984: this represents an official recognition of the Bilingual Education Project carried out between 1980-1985. Since 1984 Nicaragua has been implementing a "Project for Bilingual and Bicultural Education for Ethnic Minorities"; in Panama, a research project on native languages was developed between 1977-1981, to support bi-lingual education programmes, and in 1982 the Department of Education for Indigenous Areas was created. In Costa Rica, Decree Law Nº 16.619 passed in October 1985 ordered the creation of a model curriculum adapted to the characteristics of the native population, the introduction of bilingual and bicultural education, and the establishment of training programmes for the teaching staff involved. The experience which exists in these countries may be seen as being in its early stages, and will need support and re-inforcement if it is to be consolidated, extended and qualitatively improved. In Honduras and El Salvador, on the other hand, measures are required to promote, structure and create awareness, in order to encourage the formulation of specific policies and strategies and the implementation of experimental projects.

Finally, it should be noted that in all the countries of the sub-region, both the level of coverage and the quality and efficiency of the educational system are considerably inferior in rural areas to that in urban areas. As was pointed out above, the majority of pre-school education services are found in urban areas while, in general, rural primary schools have only one teacher –who often teaches more than one grade– and do not provide for the full period of schooling. In Nicaragua, for example, 80% of all rural schools (which numbered 3,628 in 1984) provided only partial schooling, and one quarter did not even provide up to fourth grade; 74% were run by a single teacher, and 57% of teachers in rural areas did not have professional qualifications.

In Costa Rica there are no first and second cycle incomplete schools, but the schools run by a single teacher represent almost 50% of the total, and there are also schools whose teachers take more than two grades. In Honduras, only 30% of primary school teachers in rural areas are only responsible for one grade, while the rest are in charge of between two and six grades. In Panama, the inefficiency of primary education in some rural areas is a serious problem resulting in the wastage of significant resources. In El Salvador, there are 943 schools which do not provide full primary education (out of a total of 2,631, according to estimates for 1985), the majority of which are in rural areas and, as in Guatemala, there is a great difference between schooling in urban and rural areas. The effects of the socio-economic crisis have emphasized the distortions created by the high levels of migration from the countryside to the cities, a process which still continues in all the countries of Central America. The development of education in rural zones should be seen as a priority area for support in the coming years, and it must necessarily go hand in hand with programmes to improve living conditions in the countryside. Furthermore, particular attention should be given to the training of teachers working in rural areas, in the use of techniques for teaching groups of students from different grades, for remedial activities to deal with problems of backwardness in school, the employment of strategies to cope with the specific problems of students who are too old for their class, and the introduction of practical measures to prevent school drop-out.

Literacy and adult education

In recent years the countries in the area have dealt with the problem of illiteracy in different ways; this can be explained by factors such as the different degree of priority given to literacy and adult education, the specific socio-political context of each of the countries, the diverse concepts and characteristics of the programmes, and the resources available, among others. In general, while we can observe a continuation of the tendency towards a reduction in relative terms in the proportion of the population without education, in absolute terms the number of illiterate people has continued to increase, in part as a consequence of the growth in the population and the inadequate levels of services for the school-age population, and in part because of the lack of sustained action to prevent the phenomenon of illiteracy generated by lack of practice. It should be noted that the levels of illiteracy and number of illiterates are higher in rural sectors, and that the highest rates of illiteracy are found among women and native people.

In Costa Rica special emphasis has been placed on popular participation in programmes, through non-schooling forms of education and distance learning methods, which also recognize the need to include a substantial element of training for employment. The policy of ongoing support for educational development, together with the high net levels of schooling found in the country have made it possible to maintain the rates of illiteracy at very low levels, which could be seen as a residual effect of these programmes.

Panama and Nicaragua have intermediate levels of illiteracy, these being less than 20%. In Panama, an important element of the integrated strategy to eradicate illiteracy is the high level of schooling for the population between 6 and 15 years of age. The literacy programme has given priority to work with the population between 10 and 54 years of age, and, within this group, young people between 10-14, who are considered the principal source of illiteracy; moreover, the country has begun to take important measures in relation to the training of literacy workers, especially at the provincial and local level. In Nicaragua we find an increase in educational opportunities of almost 80% between 1979 and 1982, and

associated with this, the effects of the National Literacy Campaign which produced a notable reduction in illiteracy in the country. The introduction of Popular Basic Education which involves Popular Education Collective Units (collective learning groups: about 18,000 of these groups attended 150,000 participants, principally in rural areas), the training of 18,000 community educators, the re-structuring of teachers' tasks, the promotion of communications, women's participation, the relationship between education and work and the socialization of the teaching-learning process are important achievements, but the effects of these have been reduced by the situation of the armed conflict which exists in the country, and which, since 1984, has had serious consequences for the entire educational sector.

The rates of illiteracy in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala are still very high (over 30%), despite the efforts which have been made in recent years. Honduras has provided education for 232,500 illiterate people between 1983 and 1985, using a strategy of progressive attention by regions, and stressive education for young people in the economically active population and for women in rural and marginal urban areas. Progress has been made in terms of the organization of the literacy process at the regional and local level, in associating the formal educational structure with literacy activities, in training teachers at the regional level and in measures to systematize the evaluation process. Furthermore, in 1985 PLANALFA began to take systematic action to mobilize public and private institutions as well as workers' and peasant organizations to tackle the problem of illiteracy. In El Salvador official policies have been drawn up which provide the framework and guidelines for literacy and adult education, and two important projects have been carried out between 1980 and 1984, which have made it possible to encourage and link the support of the local community and grassroots economic organizations to the literacy process, obtaining, for example, support in terms of physical infrastructure, transport and human resources from the agrarian reform co-operatives for the National Literacy Programme between 1980-1983: this was an activity co-ordinated between the State and the community through an organization operating at the departmental, municipal and zonal levels, and literacy centres at the local level. Moreover, the country's new Constitution (1986) declares that literacy is an "urgent national need", allocates resources for this purpose which are substantial in comparison with the amounts allocated in the past, establishes that education provided for the native population should preferably be bilingual, and supports a democratization of adult education services when it states that the administration of the education system should be decentralized and regionalized.

As far as the carrying out of the literacy programmes is concerned, all the countries come up against problems of absenteeism, and drop-out produced, among other reasons, by the inadequate communication of contents, the lack of training received by literacy workers, the poor handling of motivational aspects, and the weaknesses in the planning, co-ordination, programming and evaluation of the process. Because of these problems, some countries achieve annual figures so low in relation to the total number of illiterates, that they would need to make substantial increases in their annual totals if they are to reach the target of eradicating illiteracy before the end of the century: Panama will have to double its total to 11,000, Guatemala to triple its total to 160,000, El Salvador to increase its annual figures to 117,232, and Costa Rica to increase its figures by 0.6% to 8,333. Figures are not available to enable us to assess the achievements of the programmes in Honduras, but high levels of drop-out have been observed during field trips. In Nicaragua illiteracy produced by lack of practice is increasing the rates, and it is estimated that illiteracy in the country is now reaching 20%. In general, the achievement of the quantitative targets which we have just referred to needs to go hand in hand with a closer link between literacy programmes and basic education programmes, aimed at integrating the two and uniting efforts to eliminate illiteracy and bring about substantial qualitative improvements. For this improvement, methodologies should be used which teach reading and writing by involving the community and illiterate people in identifying objectives, deciding on contents, preparing materials and evaluating individual and collective achievements. It will also be necessary to make greater use of mass communication media in promoting, providing information, motivating and sustaining the programmes, particularly those with a broad coverage.

There is also a notorious lack of teaching materials and of satisfactory training for liter-

acy workers, particularly at the regional and local levels. These aspects should be made priorities for attention in the future in order to improve the quality and achievements of the programmes. Some concrete alternatives for overcoming these limitations might be the promotion and implementation of projects to design and produce different kinds of educational materials adapted to the different types of population, which are low-cost and use local resources, on the one hand, and on the other the putting into operation of permanent systems of in-service training, which also use modular and semi-distance-based methods. In relation to the contents, a closer link between the literacy and post-literacy programmes and the organized productive sector (co-operatives, craft workshops, community enterprises, and others) and a better treatment of elements associated with work could increase learners' interest and motivation.

The experiences of MOGAL (in Guatemala), PLANALFA (Honduras), and the NATIONAL LITERACY PLAN AND SALVADOREAN LITERACY PROGRAMME (El Salvador) would appear to demonstrate that literacy measures carried out as campaign-style mass actions, if they are not backed up by the necessary state support, by policies of social mobilization, and by substantial on-going educational actions, degenerate into activities characterized by low levels of efficiency which have serious consequences in terms of the illiteracy produced by lack of practice, and social credibility which is, undermined by the lack of results. These problems could be avoided by deepening understanding of the priority groups in the population (especially native peoples, refugees, displaced people and women); by guaranteeing participation for all institutions and social sectors in making decisions about the literacy process through the creation of mechanisms of inter-institutional co-ordination at the local, regional and national levels; and following a strategy of giving priority to groups within the context of a selective and progressive action, but one that is continuous, ongoing and quantitatively significant.

Finally, in the majority of the countries, the centralized management of the literacy programmes represents an important limitation, which brings a series of negative consequences such as, a lack of participation by other institutions and members of the community in decision-making and the provision of the resources necessary for literacy work; delay in the transfer of financial and material resources to the regions and provinces; low degree of social mobilization and inter-institutional co-ordination; uniform and undifferentiated treatment of the problem of illiteracy. In future, therefore, measures should be taken to decentralize and disperse decision-making and resources to regional levels, in order to strengthen literacy activities, within a general policy of regionalizing education. It will also be important to design organic structures which permit participation and decentralization in the regions and zones where work is being carried out, and to extend the use of microplanning in education as a basic technique for programme planning, implementation and evaluation.

SISTEM OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION TO SUPPORT THE PLANNING, OPERATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF ECUADOR'S LITERACY PROGRAMME

Dayssy Vega de Baca

Considerable progress has been made in the region in the field of statistical information on formal education, and basic education in particular. However, the same cannot be said of non-formal adult education, where in general there are a number of deficiencies, both in terms of the organization of information, and its processing and communication.

For this reason, we feel that it is valuable to present here a brief report on the successful development of a project for the introduction of a System of Statistical Information on Literacy initiated in Ecuador. This synthesis was prepared by OREALC on the basis of the report on activities presented by Lic. Dayssy Vega de Baca, National Project Co-ordinator.

BACKGROUND

In April 1984 the "Regional Workshop on Statistics and Information for the Planning and Administration of Literacy and Adult Education Programmes and Projects" was held in Quito. This was organized by CREFAL and Unesco-OREALC for the purpose of contributing to improving the information systems of countries in the region, and generating quantitative and qualitative indicators to support the planning, administration and evaluation of literacy and adult education programmes which are developed in the framework of the Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Recognizing the importance of the area of information and statistics in literacy and adult education programmes, at the end of the Workshop the Republic of Ecuador requested Unesco's co-operation in designing and testing a system of statistical information to provide support for the planning, operation, monitoring and evaluation of the country's literacy programme.

In December 1984, when the Ministry of Education designated the team in charge of this project, a start was made in designing the system and its instruments, as well as the programme for putting each of these into execution. In February 1985, the team responsible submitted the "PROJECT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SYSTEM OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION –SSI– FOR COMPENSATORY AND NON-SCHOOL-BASED EDUCATION"[1] for consideration by

[1] The text of the system of statistical information for Compensatory and Non-School-based Education –SSI– can be obtained on request from the OREALC Headquarters.

the National Literacy Office (now called the National Directorate of Compensatory and Non-School-based Education – DINECNE).

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

In the design and implementation of the Project, three important phases were distinguished from the outset: the experimental phase, evaluation and generalization.

Experimental phase

The implementation of a system of statistical information for compensatory education was a delicate task which demanded both technical and financial resources; for the same reason, it had to be tested in a small area, with a view to facilitating its monitoring, to reducing costs and not raising unfounded expectations among the workers associated with compensatory and non-school-based education programmes.

This phase was implemented in the cantons of Otavalo (Imbabura province) and Balzar (Guayas province), which were selected using criteria such as the ease with which the project could be monitored; the generalized presence in these cantons of all the compensatory education programmes; and the fact that they are very different regions –one in the hills and the other on the coast– which guaranteed that different social characteristics would be present. Later the canton of Machachi was added, when education promoters from Pichincha province asked to be allowed to participate in the Project.

The first activity to be carried out was the training of the Imbabura and Guayas provincial chiefs, and of supervisors and promoters from the area selected in order to test the instruments to be used by the SSI. This training took place between 23-27 April 1985 in a workshop held at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock's Training Centre in Conocoto. 18 people participated, including two promoters from Pichincha province.

It should be noted that during the training, not only were the participants introduced to the different aspects of the project and explained the use of its instruments, but it was also possible to identify the principal gaps in information, and suggestions were put forward as to how this information might be collected. The group's suggestions were recorded, and at the end of the Workshop, a number of adjustments were made in the instruments, and definitive information cards were prepared[2].

Each educator was given the necessary materials during the training process in order to facilitate the use of the instruments later on.

The instruments began to be used immediately after the training period, and information was collected for almost three months from June 1985.

In June educational activities in Otavalo completed their final term, while in Balzar activities were just starting; this represented optimum conditions for testing the relevance of the information card on participants.

As part of the monitoring process, working meetings were held with adult education teachers, participants were interviewed and visits were made to different centres and communities: these indicated that the use of the cards for collecting information did not involve any problems. The quichua educators even said that they had used the cards with 90% of the community education workers without encountering major difficulties. In contrast, difficulties did arise in the use of the participants' summary cards, and the summary cards for the centre and the educator, principally when the cantonal supervisor came to put the results together for the zonal level. It proved to be difficult to bring all the information together because there was no instrument designed specifically for this purpose. Furthermore, during the monitoring it was decided that the volume of material required for the SSI would be a serious obstacle when it came to generalizing this information for the country as a whole, since each adult education worker would have to keep a file of around 100 pages just for statistics, as well as the materials that s/he used regularly (Registers of Attendance, Timetable, etc.).

It is important to mention here that around this time DINECNE's Department of Supervision was planning to design a register of the daily activities of adult education workers. It was decided to work together on the design of a single instrument which would make it pos-

2 The information cards referred to can be sent on request.

sible to collect statistical information on and assist in the day-to-day activities of the educator. This document was tested in Imbabura province with all the adult education workers: this meant that information was available later on to assess its usefulness.

Moreover, the project managed to involve the Department of Data Processing of the MEC, whose contribution made it possible to process the information mechanically.

Evaluation

According to the timetable of activities drawn up for the project, the evaluation of the experimental phase should have been made in August 1985; however, internal administrative questions meant that this activity was postponed until 1986.

The evaluation sessions were held on April 14, 15 and 16, 1986.

This event involved the participation of the following:

- 3 adult education workers.
- 4 provincial supervisors from Guayas and Imbabura.
- 3 national officials.

The experimental phase of the project was evaluated looking at the following aspects:

- Staff training.
- Provision of material for the experimental phase.
- Use of instruments.
- Use of the summary cards.
- Use of the information.

These aspects were analysed from various points of view in an open discussion during which both supervisors and adult education workers had an opportunity to express their opinions.

The Work Register was presented at this meeting, and the criteria followed by the supervisors from Imbabura in introducing this Register were explained.

The following are the most important conclusions reached during the evaluation:

- The design of the Statistical Information System has been well thought-out; the instruments used provide information which is important for compensatory education programmes.
- The cards for gathering statistical information proved to be easy for the education workers to use. The training received previously by these workers contributed to making the cards easy to use.
- The summary cards were completed with relative ease by the educators but they need to be redesigned in order to facilitate the collection of information by zones.
- The implementation of the SSI implies relatively high costs; the possibilities of the system being self-financing should be studied.
- The SSI's instruments should be integrated into the educator's Work Register, to avoid having to use large volumes of material.
- The training of supervisors was dynamic and well carried-out. The group's participation in improving the initial design was positive.
- The training given to adult education workers should include certain techniques for collecting information which would make it easier for participants to respond to the questions.
- The supervisors' training should cover how to handle and use generalized information in planning processes.
- Care should be taken not to lose information when this is transferred on to the summary cards, so that these give the supervisor or promoter a full picture of the reality of the zone in which s/he is working.

Generalizing the SSI

Taking into account that, in accordance with the regulations covering education, educational establishments in the country operate two different systems –the Coast initiates its educational activities in May, and the Hills in October– it has been decided to introduce the SSI first on the Coast and in zones using the coastal regime, and subsequently in the Hills. In order to generalize the System, the following activities have been carried out:

- Redesigning of the SSI's instruments. This was done taking into account the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation, certain formal requirements, and the demands arising out of the data processing. Working meetings were held with Data Processing staff and with officials from the

Department of Statistics, which led to the design of a definitive "Register of Work for the Primary Compensatory Level".

- Reproduction of the Registers of Work for the Primary Compensatory Level. Approximately 9% of the registers needed were produced by DINECNE: the rest of the material will be reproduced in each province.
- Training of workers. Plans for this training have been drawn up, providing for the involvement of workers who participated in the experimental phase, with a view to creating a multiplier effect. The training will be aimed at those responsible for Statistics in each province. These in turn will train the provincial supervisors and promoters in the use of the cards, and will assist in the training of the adult education workers.
- The application of the instruments. This will begin immediately after the training, as established in the timetable already drawn up.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the main conclusions which can be drawn from this experience:

- The officials responsible for the Project at the national level believe that the assistance of Unesco and the support of DINECNE made it possible to carry out an experience which, in other circumstances, might have remained as nothing more than a good intention. The introduction of the System of Statistical Information for compensatory education will, these officials feel, ensure the availability of fresh, and reliable information to help carry out the different literacy activities, filling a gap which exists this respect at present.
- The experimental phase of the Project was carried out with enthusiasm and a high degree of approval, which made it possible to meet the objectives; this enthusiasm was caused by the fact that the Project was an answer to real needs created by the Programme, and furthermore, that the Project was introduced to the workers in positive terms.
- The information obtained using the different instruments meet the criteria laid down for the SSI, and that obtained at the local level will be processed by the centres for compensatory education themselves, to avoid possible distortions and an accumulation of errors.
- The information on participants will be processed using the "Zonal Register of Participants by Centre", which will bring together the data available in the work register completed by each education worker. The form for each zone will be completed by the zonal supervisor, thus increasing the likelihood that this will be done correctly.
- The mechanizing of the processing of data will make it possible to make immediate use of the information provided at the local level.
- An important element in the experimental phase of the project was the contribution made by supervisors and promoters in designing the instruments for obtaining information. At the present stage of the Project, the national officials responsible for it have put forward the following recommendations for consolidating the SSI:
- Given that the value of the system has been proved, efforts should be made to generalize its application throughout the primary compensatory level, taking into account the different systems of education which exist in the country. Steps should gradually be worked out for its introduction into programmes for Basic Compensatory Education, Professional and Vocational Training, ensuring in advance that the adult education workers and supervisors have had practice and are confident in the use of the instruments and the information.
- DINECNE should obtain the necessary financial support, since the extension of the SSI to other educational programmes will involve additional costs in terms of materials and the purchase of some basic equipment.
- It is advisable to provide for ongoing training for the staff responsible for the project at the national and provincial levels, as well as for their participation in events which encourage an exchange of experiences related to statistical information on education.

THE CREATION OF ALPHABETS AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY TASK

Anna Lucia D'Emilio

"Theoretical considerations demand that linguistics should become a social science. Social considerations demand that linguistics become a community science. A concern for education could be the key to meeting this demand"[1].

1. Education and bilingualism

The official recognition of vernacular[2] languages in the teaching-learning process is a relatively new development in the majority of Latin American countries, since only in recent years have the States begun to show an interest in providing a form of education which is better adapted to the socio-cultural and linguistic realities of the different groups within the population.

Indigenous groups, together with a large proportion of the rural population have until recently either not had access to educational services, or have been incorporated into a system which is alien to them and which has not responded to their interests and needs[3].

The Major Project in the Field of Education, signed by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and sponsored by Unesco[4], seeks to provide a response to this negative double dilemma in which ethnic groups have been caught: on the one hand it tries to increase the coverage of the services (eliminating illiteracy and increasing basic education), and on the other hand aims to improve the services by using the mother tongue in teaching, incorporating elements of the native culture into the curriculum, and preparing and training native people for the different levels and methods of the system.

The change in governments' attitudes towards vernacular cultures and languages has also come in response to the pressure applied by the indigenous people themselves, whose organizations have (since the 1960s and 1970s) been gaining in strength and decision-making power. Their struggles, which initially focus-

1 Hymes, Dell. Foundations in Socio-Linguistics: An Ethnographic Approach, Tavistock Publications, London 1974.

2 A vernacular language should be understood as one "which is the mother tongue of a group which is socially and politically dominated by another group whose language is different", while the mother tongue, or native language is one "which a person acquires at an early age and which normally becomes his/her means of thinking and comunicating" (Unesco: The use of vernacular language in education: The report of the Unesco Meeting of Specialists, Paris, 1951). Thus the term, "vernacular language" emphasizes broader socio-linguistic factors.

3 See Tedesco, J.C., "Educational models and school failure" in ECLA Review, Nº 21, Santiago, 1983, pps. 131-134.

4 OREALC: Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribean: objectives, characteristics and methods of action, OREALC, Santiago, 1981.

sed principally on the issue of land-ownership, now seek with greater clarity of purpose to revive the people's cultural identity and win recognition for multi-ethnic and multi-lingual states.

Decolonization, ethnic development and participation are elements of the conceptual framework which guides indigenous movements in the region in defining their strategies and actions[5].

If we accept the proposals put forward by the grassroots organizations with respect to the education which should be given in indigenous areas, we will have to reject transitional bilingual programmes, which use the mother tongue simply as a bridge to becoming proficient in Spanish, and instead chose a type of permanent bilingualism in which the two languages are used throughout the entire schooling process. Here a number of contradictions arise which we could divide into two groups: a) those related to the nature of the vernacular languages; and b) those which refer to the relationship with the official language.

a) Virtually all the native languages of Latin America are agraphic, that is, based on oral traditions. Without going into the differences between languages with and without a written form (differences which do not express value judgements) we see an initial difficulty for achieving permanent bilingualism in the lack of texts in vernacular languages.

   A person who is bilingual in Spanish and English, for example, does not face major problems, since s/he can find a whole series of educational materials, literature and scientific texts both in English and Spanish.

   What real possibilities are there, on the other hand, for the person who speaks guaraya?

   The most that is offered are small educational books for basic schooling. If the person wants to go into any subject in greater depth, if they are keen on reading, if they want to know what news is in the newspaper, or if they have the possibility of continuing their studies, they are obliged to use their second language. Furthermore, each language may have a certain number of variations, and even if written works are produced, these are not always accessible to all those who speak languages in the same linguistic family. For example, a quechua version of García Márquez' book, "Chronicle of a Foreseen Death"[6] exists, but not all those who speak Quechua can read and understand it with the same ease.

b) With respect to the contradictions created by external factors and which, to a great extent, refer to the linguistic influence exercised by the dominant group, there is evidence of a drastic reduction in the social functions[7] which can be carried out in the vernacular language.

   Aymara, Guarani, Mapudugun[8], etc, have, after centuries of marginalization, been relegated to the domestic sphere and to agricultural activities, while in education, the law, business, religion and relations with the State, Spanish has replaced mother tongue languages. Indeed, the general characteristic of the countries of Latin America is not bilingualism but rather the separation of languages, there being a direct relationship between the use of one or other of the two codes, and social class and/or particular social functions[9].

   One of the consequences of this restriction of social functions is the impoverishment of the vernacular vocabulary through the incorporation of Spanish terms either in place of the words used originally (as in the case, for example, of numbers, colours, names of animals or places, etc.) or to express new concepts generated by scientific and technological developments.

   When one attempts to restore to the native language a function which had been prohibited –education– one comes up against the need to develop this language,

5 See AA.VV. "América Latina: etnodesarrollo y etnocidio", FLACSO, San José, Costa Rica, 1982; and Rodríguez, N. Masferrer, E. and Vargas Vega, R. (editors) "Educación, Etnias y Descolonización en América Latina", 2 vols. UNESCO-III, México, 1983.

6 García Marquez, G., Mushuc quellca huañuy ta yachashpa nuillarca, Oveja Negra Ed, Bogotá, 1986.

7 The term "domain" would be more appropriate, taking this as the whole range of social situations in which certain rules regarding linguistic behaviour are established. However, we will use the term "social functions" in order to make the argument more fluid.

8 The Mapuche language.

9 See Fishman, J., The Sociology of Language. An Interdisciplinary Social Science Approach to Language in Society, Newbury House Publ., Rowley, Mass., 1972.

since its development has to a great extent been frustrated.

I am not arguing that the native languages are inadequate for expressing the wide range of information which is available in the world today, instead, I would like to emphasize that because of the kind of relationship that exists with the language of the hegemonic groups, native languages have been unable to fully develop their potential and creativity. "Quechañol" or "Aymarañol" are examples of this process of cultural assimilation in which there are such strong influences that not only is the mother tongue not maintained (because it incorporates so many words borrowed from the official language) but the syntax of Spanish is also transformed, as the grammatical structure of the vernacular predominates.

According to Cerrón Palomino[10], the Spanish spoken in some areas of Peru is a creole variety which is not exclusive to the bilingual members of the population, as it has become the only language used by a number of groups.

From what has been said above, we may conclude that permanent bilingualism rather than being a real option in education, is a goal which, if it is to be achieved, must be given special attention.

The resolution of the contradictions we have indicated depends not simply on the political amenability of governments, but also on detailed linguistic planning, which includes standardizing the language: the first step in this is to create and get official recognition of its written code.

2. The creation of alphabets

To introduce education in the mother tongue without having a previous agreement about the signs to be used involves risks not merely of an educational nature. How can a native person accept that his/her language is written in so many different ways, depending on the education worker and/or linguist who happens to be present, whereas Spanish maintains its rigid structure? What might appear to be a simple question of spelling could have serious consequences for cultural identity.

The tendency to reject the traditional written forms was explained to me by an indigenous person as a way of solving the problems encountered in relations with the local public servant in the identification and acceptance of official documents (birth certificates, electoral registers, property deeds, education certificates).

The creation of alphabets for oral languages has in the majority of cases been the task exclusively of linguists, and the versions produced have not taken into account the suggestions which might have been made by education workers or by the users themselves.

Undoubtedly, advice is needed from a linguist, but full responsibility for such a delicate task cannot be left in this person's hands, particularly since linguists often only make an internal analysis of the codes, ignoring extremely relevant socio-linguistic factors.

Between the grapheme (written form) and phoneme (sound) there is no scientifically determined relationship: any sound may be represented by any symbol. The crucial factor is that there should be social agreement on the relationship between phonemes and graphemes.

The arbitrary nature of the symbol should not lead to the written system being chosen arbitrarily, and I believe that before a new code is validated, consideration should be given to what codes already exist for other languages, both those within the same linguistic family, and those used by territorily contiguous groups.

For example, if we analyze the alphabets of some microethnic amazonian groups, we find that the same phonemes have been given different graphic forms. This problem is still more serious if we consider that there are a considerable number of people who speak two or three indigenous languages and, because of earlier contacts between people from different cultures, many of the words are the same (both in their form and their meaning) in more than one language. One example should serve to demonstrate the gravity of this problem: the Quechua spoken in the Peruvian Amazon, and in particular in Pastaza, has had a clear influence on other native languages such as "Candoshi" (from the Jibaro linguistic family[11]

10 Cerrón Palomino Rodolfo, "O ensino da lingua. De Limitaçao e perspectivas" in Monserrat, R and Gryner, H (eds), Lingua, Cultura e Desenvolvimento, Ed. Brasilia, Brasilia 1974, pps. 53-68.

11 Tuggy, L., "Vocabulario Candoshi de Loreto", ILV, Pascallpa, 1966.

whose vocabulary has already incorporated many Quechua terms. We find these words written in different ways depending on whether the texts are in Quechua or Candoshi:

English	Quechua	Candoshi
half	chawpi	chavpi
ten	chunka	choga
thousand	waranga	varaga
pig	kuchi	kochi

When these words are read with the correct pronunciation, they should be exactly the same. What has led to them being written in such different ways? The simple fact that the linguist who created the alphabet for Candoshi did not take the trouble to look at the Quechua alphabet, with the result that we find the grapheme -w- written as -v-, and the grapheme -u- as -o-. In linguistic terms both forms are valid, but no thought has been given to the difficulties which a child who is bilingual in Quechua and Candoshi will have when s/he has to write in one language or the other; these difficulties will be increased, threatening his/her chances of doing well at school, when s/he has to learn to write in Spanish as well (in addition to the -w- and the -v-, we now find the -hu-, all these symbolizing a single phoneme, the /w/).

Therefore, as well as linguistic criteria, *educational* criteria should be applied, so that learning how to read and write is not made still more complicated.

Perfect and totally phonemic alphabets have been created for some native Latin American languages, but they have dropped out of usage, and have not even been accepted by the indigenous people themselves.

Thus it is not a question simply of chosing written systems, but rather to use them as well, as Fishman says[12].

> "The creation of systems of writing is only significant when it results in these being accepted and used, and these are extremely revolutionary, rather than strictly technical developments".

This is indeed a complex problem: on the one hand we have the linguists who are accustomed to making internal studies of the codes; and on the other the teachers who are continually having to mediate between the linguist's alphabet and common sense about the teaching process.

12 Fishman, J., op. cit.

The same controversy is debated among professionals from indigenous groups. Some feel that the national language should not be taken as a reference point, because it perpetuates subordination to the official culture; while for others, the use of a form of writing similar to Spanish does not affect the demand for a decolonization of education.

Among the principles for the proper creation of alphabets, J. Berry[13] mentions:

Linguistic:	does the alphabet represent the language system economically, consistently, unambiguously?
Pedagogical:	how does the alphabet achieve the strictly utilitarian aim of economy of time and labour in learning to read and write?
Psychological:	how far does the alphabet respect the psychological and physiological processes involved in the reading and writing acts?
Typographical:	how far is the alphabet suited to the needs of modern techniques of graphic representation –machine writing, etc.?

If, as well as providing adequate responses to these questions, the alphabet for the vernacular language also assists in the learning of the national language, I believe that it has greater potential for being accepted and used in the teaching and learning processes.

Smalley[14] lists the following among the criteria to bear in mind in making alphabets:

- maximum motivation for the learners,
- maximum representation of speech,
- maximum ease of learning,
- maximum transfer,
- maximum ease of reproduction.

The objections generally put forward to the question of the ease of transfer do not take into account the fact that in rural areas

13 Berry, J., "The Making of Alphabets", in Fishman, J. (ed): Readings in the Sociology of Language, The Hague, Mouton, 1970 (2nd ed). pps 737-753. See also Berry, J., "The Making of Alphabets Revisited" in Fishman, J. (ed): Advances in the Creation and Revision of Writing Sistems, The Hague, Mouton, 1977, pps 3-16.

14 Smalley, W et. al., Orthography Studies: Articles on New Writing Systems, London, 1964.

(especially those populated by native people) one finds the highest rates of illiteracy, repetition and school drop-out. If a young person leaves school at an early age and only learns to read and write in his/her mother tongue, s/he will not be able to read Spanish even if s/he speaks it.

The choice of symbols ought to allow, within the limits set by the phonic structure of each language, an easy transfer to the official language; for this reason it is a good idea for all like phonemes to be written the same way, except where the Spanish alphabet already creates difficulties for spelling because the original phonic differentiation has been lost (as for example in the v-b, or the c-z-s followed by vowels).

In practice it is not always possible to respect all the criteria referred to, as sometimes they come into contradiction with one another. For example, in the "National Seminar on Uniting the Guarani Alphabet", held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in June 1986, the most problematic decision was how to express graphically the phoneme /k/. There were those who emphasized the ease of transfer into Spanish, proposing that the letters c-qu be used, while others defended the letter -k- as facilitating the process of learning to read and write in the mother tongue (as well as for specifically linguistic principles).

The typographic criteria cannot be disregarded, as it is unlikely that typewriters could be manufactured ad hoc for each native language. At a Unesco meeting in Bamako (1966) on the use of modern languages for literacy work, a number of specialists emphasized the economic and technical consequences of adopting special signs and letters which do not exist in the official national language.

Finally, we also need to mention the specific case of languages spoken by people living in areas divided by national frontiers, as in the case of Guarani and many other Indo-american languages.

Human and economic resources would be saved if the development of a written code was undertaken jointly by specialists and users from the different countries. It is a pity, for example, that although in Bolivia an Aymara alphabet has been officially recognised (D.S. Nº 20.227, passed in 1984), the agencies which work with Aymara groups in the north of Chile use the written form devoloped by other Bolivian linguists; and it is still more serious that within Bolivia itself there are still groups using the CALA-ILV alphabet (which is considerably different from the official alphabet). Part of the responsibility for these problems lies with technical and financial co-operation agencies which continue to support activities which are obstacles to the standardization of vernacular languages.

When many variations exist within one language with more or less marked differences both in their phonological characteristics and their morphology, syntax and vocabulary, standardization of the written code does not necessarily lead to the elimination of all the variations in speech. The Spanish language, which has a generally accepted orthographic system, still maintains phonological differences between different countries, and even within Spain itself.

In the case of Quechua, Bolivia and Ecuador chose to unify their written codes, while in Peru a pan-alphabet was established (by Ministerial Resolution Nº 1218-85-ED) which includes all the different phonemes which exist in the different zones, with each variety using only the letters it needs[15].

When the decision is taken to create a unified alphabet, it is clear that it cannot be expected that an exact one-to-one correspondence between the grapheme and the phoneme will be achieved, as many linguistics seem to hope, especially those associated with the Summer Institute of Linguistics[16]. It should be said, moreover, that these same linguists have for a number of reason had to partially modify their initial position with regard to the practicality of a totally phonemic alphabet.

According to Berry[17], a one-to-one correspondence with the spoken language is pos-

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15 For example, the Quechua of Ayacucho uses only 18 graphemes, while the Quechua of Cuzco-Collao uses 29. See: Soto Ruiz, C., "Gramática Quechua Ayacucho-Chanca", Ministerio de Ed., IEP, Lima, 1976 and Cusihuaman, A., "Gramática Quechua Cuzco-Collao". Ministerio de Educación, IEP, Lima, 1976.

16 For example, see Pike, Kenneth L., **Phonemics; a Technique for Reducing Language to Writing**, University of Michigam, 1947; Nida, "Practical Limitations to a Phonemic Alphabet", **The Bible Translator 15**, 1954; Gudshinsky, S., **Handbook of Literacy**, Summer Institute of Linguistics, Okla., 1953.

17 Berry, J., op. cit. in Fishman, 1970 (2nd ed).

sible only if one rejects the principle of normalization, since in order to normalize a written language, some pronounciations have to be ignored, and written forms adopted which are phonetic for some people but not for others.

In summary, an activity which might appear to fall clearly into the sphere of linguistics such as the creation of alphabets– should be brought out of the boundaries of this discipline, and socio-linguistic and educational factors be taken into consideration, as well as the real possibilities which exist for native people to become literate.

We should not allow ourselves to be guided by scientific purism, but rather by common sense and the practical need for cultures with an oral tradition to be given a written code.

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OREALC ACTIVITIES

REGIONAL NETWORK FOR TRAINING, INNOVATION AND RESEARCH IN THE PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMMES – REPLAD

Seminar-Workshop on Microplanning of Literacy using non-conventional strategies (Popayan, Colombia, February 19-23, 1986).

Organized with technical collaboration from the Department of Educational Administration and Planning at the Universidad del Valle, and with administrative support from the Cauca Secretariat of Education; 66 people participated –planners, administrators, designers and those responsible for co-ordinating literacy processes at the local, zonal and sub-regional levels–. This was the second time that the Universidad del Valle carried out microplanning activities using non-conventional strategies. The results obtained confirm the appropriateness of the participative model to this kind of problem. The concepts of the literacy process discussed in this Seminar-workshop are translated into practices, infrastructure and personnel organized in a very different way from the traditional one.

Meeting of the National Network for Training, Innovation and Research in the Planning and Administration of Literacy Programmes (Panama, March 13-14, 1986)

This meeting, which was called by ICASE (Universidad de Panama) brought together authorities and specialists from the different institutions participating in the Panamanian REPLAD: the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, General Directorate of Community Development, National Institute for Professional Training and ICASE. 40 participants. Proposals were elaborated for new methods of intersectorial and inter-institutional co-ordination in the planning and development of literacy and adult education programmes, and the functions and tasks to be performed by each institution at the national as well as at the provincial and regional levels, were specified. The Ministry of Health presented a detailed Education for Health Programme to the meeting, giving precise indications as to its users, contents and the technical methods to be used.

Training Workshop on the Planning and Administration of Basic Education and Literacy Programmes (Lima, Cuzco, Puno and Cajamarca (Perú, April 1986)).

Four Workshops organized in collaboration with the National Institute for Research and Development in Education, for the purpose of analyzing educational policies and plans, and identifying the theoretical and technical bases of planning and administration in the areas of Basic Education and Literacy: 127 participants from the Ministry of Education and the Departmental Directorates of Education.

Project for Co-operative Research into factors related to drop-out and the retention of illiterate adults in Literacy Programmes

This Research Project was designed by the Research Pro-

gramme of the Universidad de Monterrey (Mexico) in co-ordination with the National Literacy and Popular Education Service –SENALEP– of Bolivia, the Special Programme for Civic Education –PEEC– of the Dominican Republic and the National Literacy Plan –PLANALFA– of Honduras. Its objectives are to establish the factors related to drop-out of illiterate adults, to find out the expectations of participants of literacy programmes and subsequent achievements in obtaining employment and to determine the influence on enrollment, on the continuation and/or abandonment of these Programmes of factors such as support materials, methods of organization and administration, and the types of training provided for the personnel responsible. The Project is at an advanced stage of development, and it is hoped that the first results will be available shortly.

Horizontal co-operation between Institutions participating in the Network

A number of REPLAD's member Institutions have signed agreements for exchanges of specialists and experiences in different fields related to the planning and administration of education:

- The National Directorate of Teacher Training and Advanced Studies –DINACAPED– (Ecuador) with the Universidad del Valle (Colombia) in the field of training for evaluation.
- The Universidad Estadual de Campinas (Brazil) with the Instituto Magisterial Superior (Uruguay) in the fields of the training of adult education workers and supervision in education.
- The Universidad Estatal a Distancia (Costa Rica) with the Universidad de Monterrey in issues related to planning distance literacy teaching activities.
- ICASE (Universidad de Panama) with the Instituto Magisterial Superior (Uruguay)in the fields of the planning of pre-school education and training for educational administration.

REGIONAL NETWORK FOR PRE- AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL – PICPEMCE

1986 is being dedicated to consolidating the activities of the PICPEMCE Network at the national level, and to extending it to a further 6 or 7 countries in the region. Moreover, some sub-regional or regional level actions are mentioned below, in order to encourage reflection and action by the Network's member institutions.

Bolivia

The PICPEMCE Network in Bolivia is concentrating primarily on the Rural Teacher Training Schools and is collaborating in actions with UNICEF and the Associated Schools in developing these. A Seminar was held in Caracollo during which projects and materials were presented for incorporating the subject of civil rights into the training given to educational workers in Bolivia.

Colombia - Cali

A PICPEMCE Network has already been formed in the southwestern region, made up of 13 universities which are co-ordinated by the Universidad del Valle in Cali, the focal point for the zone. These universities have held three "replica" seminars following on from the Workshop for Reflection, on the subject of "Innovations in the preparation of teachers for marginal areas":

- October 18-19, 1985, at the Universidad Surcolombiana, Faculty of Educational Sciences in Neiva, Colombia.
- November 14-15, 1985, at the Faculty of Education, Universidad de Caldas in Manizales.
- November 21-22, 1985, at the Universidad del Cauca, Faculty of Educational Sciences in Popayan.

As a result of these meetings and the previous actions, each of the universities is developing activities around this theme, such as:

- Integrated Training Plan in 6 municipalities.
- Training of leaders for marginal areas.
- Creation of small businesses in a number of regions.
- Training of native people.
- Definition of the concept of marginality.

– Environmental education project in the Ruiz zone.

Among the actions to be carried out in the immediate future are the publication of an information bulletin, a post-graduate project in training, and an inventory of the resources of each Faculty of Education.

The Caribbean

Contacts have been made, through the "Caribbean Network of Educational Innovations for Development" (CARNEID) and the Faculty of Education of the University of the West Indies, Barbados, in order for St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Guyana to enter the PICPEMCE Network in 1986.

Costa Rica

The Faculty of Education of the Universidad de Costa Rica, the focal point of the PICPEMCE Network, has carried out eight research projects related to the adaptation of programmes for the preparation and training of education workers in marginal areas, under contract to OREALC. Copies of these studies may be obtained by writing directly to the Dean of this Faculty.

Chile

The Centre for Educational Training, Experimentation and Research, the focal point of the PICPEMCE Network, invited all the country's universities and institutes of higher education to a meeting which aimed to provide an opportunity for dialogue, analysis and ongoing reflection on innovations and changes in the preparation of education workers. The meeting was held on December 5 and 6, 1985.

The idea behind the meeting was to open an ongoing dialogue between the 35 institutions responsible for the preparation and training of education workers in Chile. Three commissions were set up –Nursery Education, Primary Education and Secondary Education– to take charge of the monitoring process.

The Chilean Association for Educational Curriculum, with support from OREALC, organised a Latin American Meeting of Specialists in Curriculum, on the subject of "Culture, Human Development and the Curriculum" at the Professional Institute of Osorno, between January 14 and 17, 1986.

More than 100 specialists from Argentina, Costa Rica, Chile and Venezuela participated in this meeting which focussed on the problems of curriculum programming in terms of the interdisciplinary approach, curricular innovation, regionalization, research and training.

As a follow-up, it is intended to arrange an exchange of teachers from the south of Chile and Argentina, and the development of "innovation units" for use in preparation and training in Latin America.

Ecuador

The first stage of the study on the "Evaluation Package" and the "Guía para talleres de Formación de Educadores en la Integración entre Educadores y Trabajo Productivo" have been completed; these were carried out by DINACAPED, the focal point of the PICPEMCE Network. This study, based on the use of these materials in the Teacher Training Schools, indicated that the documents published by OREALC will be extremely useful in the Training Centres in the region.

El Salvador

With the assistance of a consultant a Workshop on "Methodology and materials in the context of a flexible curriculum" was held between April 29 and May 16 at the headquarters of the Programme for Ongoing Training for Teachers in Service (PPMS). The Workshop involved the participation of 37 school teachers, nuclei directors and teaching advisors from marginal areas, and examined practical methodologies for reformulating the curriculum at the local level.

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"Participative methodology in the training of education workers" was the central theme of a practical workshop for some 45 teacher trainers from the PPMS which was held between May 7-10.

The most important result was an agreement between the main institutions responsible for the preparation and training of education workers in El Salvador, to promote "substantial changes" in the quality of educational activities in the country. The PPMS and the National Commission for Teacher Training took responsibility for monitoring progress.

Peru

As a result of the reorganization of the new government

in Peru, Mr. Manuel Benítez Llanos, the Director General of Higher Education in the Ministry of Education, has been named co-ordinator of PICPEMCE's activities in the country.

Uruguay

The "First Seminar on Innovations and Changes in Teacher Training" was held at the Casa de la Cultura in Maldonado, Uruguay, between March 17 and 21, 1986; this event was co-ordinated by the "Instituto Magisterial Superior". A number of papers were presented on subjects such as drop-out formal education and models for the integration of formal and non-formal education, and the preparation of teachers for a new kind of education; these were subsequently transformed into projects in the group work sessions.

A particularly interesting part of the meeting was the presentation and discussion of "Informaties" and its repercussions on teacher training.

"The First Bi-national Meeting on Informaties and Education" were held at the Rivera Municipal Theatre between April 18-19, 1986, with the participation of Uruguay and Brazil. The perspectives for the future of informaties without access to computers in the stimulating intellectual processes. More than 500 teachers participated.

Venezuela

On December 5-6, 1985 a "Regional Technical Meeting of the Network for the Preparation and Training of Adult Education Workers" was held, sponsored by the Organization of Ibero-american States for Education, Science and Culture (OIE), in Caracas, Venezuela.

The meeting, which was co-ordinated with the actions of the PICPEMCE Network, was attended by specialists in adult education and administrative staff interested in the preparation and training of educational workers.

REGIONAL NETWORK FOR TRAINING OF PERSONNEL AND SPECIFIC SUPPORT FOR LITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES – REDALF

First Regional Workshop for strengthening REDALF

This meeting was organized in co-ordination with CREFAL in Mexico and held at the Headquarters of this organization in Patzcuaro, Michoacan, from March 17-21.

The meeting involved the participation of representatives of REDALF's member institutions, and the following were the main results achieved:

The constitution and organization of the five substantive projects to be undertaken by REDALF:

1. Strengthening of the countries' existing training capacity.
2. Elaboration and exchange of training materials.
3. Development of a system of information and documentation.
4. Systematization, evaluation and investigation of innovative experiences in training.
5. The exchange of specialized personnel and horizontal co-operation at the national and regional levels.

a) The principles of each project were established, its main methods of action were indicated, its objectives and operational strategies were specified, as were the principal programmed activities.

b) An in-depth analysis was made of the most important demands and the offers of co-operation put forward by REDALF's member institutions and on the basis of this analysis, an Operational Plan was drawn up which takes into account national initiatives and establishes the priorities for the regional events and research to be carried out within the framework of REDALF.

c) It was confirmed that the Latin American Adult Education Council (CEAAL) would participate in REDALF through its own NGO networks which are being established in the region. A representative of CARCAE, a network parallel to REDALF but serving the English-speaking Caribbean, will also participate, and common lines of action and activities which will benefit the institutions participating in this network were also agreed.

d) The requirements to be recognized as a member of REDALF were established in a letter of intent to be signed with OREALC. The criteria for admitting new members were also defined.

The results of this workshop commit OREALC and CREFAL to give their joint support to the realization of the Operational Plan which was agreed on, and also commits the institutions which make up the Network.

Nicaragua

A mission was carried out in Nicaragua between May 12 -17, the central objective of which was to analyse the present state of literacy in the country and draw up a strategy for a National Literacy Plan adapted to the special circumstances which exist in the country, and the efforts being made to renovate education. From this analysis it could be seen that, because of the increase in the illiteracy rate in relation to the achievements made by the National Literacy Campaign, there needs to be an effective decentralization in the organization of education services which takes into account the specific characteristics of the different regions of the country. In this sense the previous strategies' lack of zonal analyses of the real degree of illiteracy are emphasized, along with the lack of precise objectives and of short, medium and long-term goals, and the inadequate attention given to solving the problems of children who do not attend school or do not continue at school. In the conclusions, it is proposed that progress be made on two fronts, through the strengthening of regional initiatives in this sphere, and the elaboration of a national strategy based on a recognition of regional and zonal differences, with the entire new process of extending literacy in Nicaragua being co-ordinated at a national level.

Venezuela

Agreement was reached with Venezuela's Ministry of Education, through the Directorate of Adult Education, to hold two evaluation seminars on the country's National Literacy Plan. The first will be held between July 14-19, 1986 in Caracas and Maracaibo, at the time when the third quarterly evaluation of this Plan is made. The second seminar, coinciding with the fourth quarterly evaluation, will be held in November in Barquisimeto. The meetings will be attended by the representatives in charge of carrying out the Plan in the different states, and members of the National Literacy Commission. The results of the previous evaluations as well as the progress and difficulties observed during each quarter will be the basis of the evaluative analysis, and the seminar should propose actions and priority tasks to be carried out in each state in order to achieve the Plan's objectives.

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From September 29 to October 3 1986 a Regional Technical Seminar on "Alternatives for Adult Basic Education" will be held in Caracas, Venezuela. The Seminar will be attended by representatives from state bodies from different countries in the region (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru). The participants will present documents illustrating the experiences that have been carried out at the national level. The objective of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for discussion on the basis of an exchange of information between the participants, and to develop strategies on the basis of an analysis of the central document on this subject presented at the meeting.

Cuba

OREALC will finance the organization of a 10-15 day course in Cuba for representatives of the Network's member organizations (8 to 10 people) for the purpose of studying the different forms of education for workers and peasants being used in the country. This study tour, which should take place in the second half of 1986, will be organized by the Cuban Ministry of Education, through its Directorate of Adult Education, in co-ordination with OREALC.

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Among the activities to support the REDALF to be carried out with CREFAL in co-ordination with OREALC, the following activities will be organized:

a) A research which will systematize the experiences selected in the sphere of teaching and learning in Adult Education, and which will be completed in 12 months: the results of this should be published in a document which will be the central paper at an annual technical meeting to be held during this two-year period (1986-1987).

b) A series of support and technical assistance activities

specifically requested by REDALF's member institutions, which include: missions to the countries where the Network's member institutions are based; identification, systematization and operationalization of mechanisms and strategies of horizontal co-operation which contribute to optimizing the resources available in the countries for achieving the objectives established by REDALF; preparation and publicising of reports on the technical co-operation activities being carried out within the framework of REDALF.

c) Research into post-literacy and work, and a study of two cases in Mexico.

d) The organization, in co-ordination with OREALC, of a regional workshop on the systematization and evaluation of methods and materials for training key personnel in literacy and Adult Education programmes – it is proposed that the meeting be held in March 1987.

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OREALC decided to carry out a research project on the links between post-literacy and the world of work and production. A workshop on this subject was held, in which the basic document prepared for the meeting, which sets out the conceptual framework of the study, some elements for designing the research, and puts forward a first draft of the instruments which will be used for collecting data, was analysed. In the workshop, which was held in OREALC between June 25-28, after analysing the theoretical conceptual framework proposed in the basic document, proposals were formulated in relation to the questions raised by the theoretical framework, in relation to the research strategy, and to the sample to be used, and guidelines were established for the case studies.

The meeting was attended by Silvia Schmelkes, the technical Co-ordinator of the Centre for Educational Studies in Mexico, author of the basic document and Unesco's Consultant for this Project; Oscar Corvalán, Researcher from CIDE (Chile), Marcela Gajardo, Associate Researcher in FLACSO (Chile), Juan Eduardo Garcia Huidobro, Researcher from CIDE (Chile), Conrado Mauricio, UNESCO/UNDP Project Expert for Project RLA/83/012 on Literacy in Central America and Panama; Tomas Miklos, Director of CREFAL (Mexico), Jaime Niño, Rector of the Universidad Piloto de Colombia, and Cesar Picón, OAS Expert attached to CREFAL (Mexico).

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Among the activities being developed by REDALF and PICPEMCE, three pilot projects are being carried out to train education workers able both to teach children and adults for rural areas. An initial meeting on this activity was held at OREALC between July 3-8, 1986, with the representatives of the institutions chosen to carry out these projects. The meeting was attended by Marta Fierro and Lilian Mercado from the General Council of Education of the Province of La Rioja (Argentina), Mario Diaz of the Universidad del Valle in Colombia, Alvaro Pantoja from the Universidad Pedagógica de Bogotá, from Colombia, and Rodrigo Vera, UNESCO's Consultant for this project. In the meeting the basic document prepared by Rodrigo Vera was analysed; this gives the outlines of a proposal in the form of a Design for Training and a Design for Research. The Projects, aimed at transforming rural teachers into educators able both to teach children and adults, will be carried out in three rural areas of the countries mentioned above as of August 1, and will last for 14 months. During this period three phases will be developed: the preparation phase, the implementation phase, and the systematization of experiences. In the first meeting the proposal made in the basic document was discussed and analysed in detail, a general draft was outlined of the Plan of Operations, and the institutional steps which need to be taken in order to carry the projects out were defined.

REGIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR THE MAJOR PROJECT – SIRI

Constitution of the Working Group in Brazil

Through Ministerial Decrees issued on May 12 and June 2 1986, the Brazilian Ministry of Education, taking into consideration the desire of the present Government to develop the National Programme of Education for All (whose objectives coincide with those of the Major Project) and to ensure that the country participates fully in the Major Project's Regional Information System, constituted a Working Group res-

ponsible for preparing information related to the SIRI. This Group is made up of representatives from the General Secretariat of the MEC, the Secretariat for Teaching in the 1st and 2nd Grades, the Secretariat of International Affairs, the Secretariat of Articulation and Planning Studies, from the Statistics Service, the National Institute for Studies in Educational Research and the National Foundation for Youth and Adult Education –EDUCAR–.

Workshop for the countries in the Gulf of Mexico (Patzcuaro, Mexico, March 5-7, 1986)

This was held in CREFAL and was organized jointly by OREALC and CREFAL. It was attended by 3 representatives from Cuba, 1 from Haiti, 6 from Mexico, and 3 from the Dominican Republic. In the three days of discussion and dialogue, the participants made important contributions on the future actions of the SIRI in the sub-region. OREALC presented the experiences obtained in the course of the system's implementation, and methodological documents prepared for this purpose.

The Directorate of International Relations from the Mexican Secretariat of Public Education was named as the Sub-regional Operational Unit of the SIRI.

Workshop for the countries of the River Plate Basin (Montevideo, Uruguay, April 15-18, 1986)

The Workshop was organized by OREALC with the collaboration of the Government of the Republic of Uruguay, through its Ministry of Education and Culture. The aim of the Workshop, for which co-operation was obtained from Unesco's Regional Office for Science and Technology, was to provide technical information on the operation of the Regional Information System in the sub-region, on the methodology for elaborating documentary information and on new techniques to facilitate the production of socio-educational statistics.

The proposals drawn up will allow future actions to be planned in the countries of the sub-region. The workshop involved the participation of two representatives each from Argentina and Brazil, three from Paraguay and four from Uruguay.

These two workshops have resulted in the incorporation of a further eight countries into the Regional Information System, which now covers almost all the countries in the region.

BILINGUAL MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION

National Seminar on the Unification of the Guarani Alphabet, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, June 18-21, 1986

This event, which was organized by the National Literacy and Popular Education Service, SENALEP, UNICEF, Unesco-CREFAL and the Centre for Indigenous Peoples of Eastern Bolivia, CIDOB, led to the unification of the Guarani communities in Bolistep necessary for the implementation of a literacy and basic bilingual and inter-cultural education plan for the Guarani alphabet as a first via.

The meeting was attended by specialists from Bolivia and abroad, as well as representatives of various indigenous organizations.

OREALC will organize a Regional Workshop on "The elaboration of an inter-cultural curriculum and the preparation of teaching materials in and for the mother tongue". This event will be held in Argentina in October, and specialists in different disciplines from a number of countries in the region will be invited. As a follow-up activity OREALC will carry out a pilot project.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

National Seminar on the "Problem of Children with special needs: their education and development". Lo Barnechea, Santiago, Chile, March 17-21, 1986

This activity was sponsored by OREALC, and involved the collaboration of the Centre for Educational Training, Experimentation and Research, UNICEF, the Metropolitan University of Educational Sciences, and the Ministry of Education.

Approximately 40 representatives of a large number of non-governmental organizations, public and private institutions, training centres and associations of parents trained in education, participated in the event.

This seminar represented the culmination of three preparatory workshops held

during 1985, in which the following subjects were analysed: factors determining the development of children between 0-14 years; present approaches and options in education and innovative alternatives; preparation and training of education workers.

During 1986 OREALC will hold similar events in Venezuela and in a Central American country.

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

OREALC has been supporting CEANIM (Centre for Studies on and Care for Children and Women) in making an evaluation of the process of transferring direct control of a pre-school programme from the external agency to the community itself.

This comparative study of centres for early care receiving direct guidance from the NGO and others which have already become independent has underlined not simply the continuity in the performance of the children, but also the motivation and commitment of mothers from marginal urban areas of Santiago when they take on responsibility for the integral care of children under six.

ASSOCIATED SCHOOLS

As a contribution to the celebration of International Peace Year, OREALC has invited 10 countries in the region to chose an Associated School which will dedicate 5 months to studying and developing materials on peace and Unesco's 40 years of activity.

The person responsible for the project in each country will be invited to a regional meeting on this subject which will be held in Costa Rica in October.

PROJECT FOR UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION AND LITERACY (UPEL)

This project is being carried out within the framework of the Unesco/UNICEF Co-operative Programme, in three countries in the region (Bolivia, Nicaragua and Peru).

As the projects are located in marginal urban and rural areas, they represent pilot experiences in achieving the first objectives of the Major Project.

The UNICEF Office in Bolivia is organizing –with support from Unesco– a regional meeting on the UPEL Project, which will be attended by the countries where the project is already being carried out, as well as other countries which are interested in becoming involved in it. The meeting will be held in Sucre, Bolivia, in October.

ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION

A course was held in San Salvador for training the trainers of adult education workers: this took place in the last weeks of May, and the first weeks of June, and involved collaboration between OREALC and the OEI. The course was attended by about forty participants who formed a fairly heterogeneous group. OREALC was responsible for organizing a week-long workshop on the psychology of learning and the participative method.

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In May Mexico joined the Regional Network for Pre- and in-service Training of Educational Personnel, PICPEMCE. The country will be represented by the Department of Educational Research –DIE– of the Centre for Advanced Studies –CEA– of the National Polytechnical Institute IPN. This institution is highly respected both in national circles and by Latin American educators and researchers and its involvement in research activities has led it recently to give growing importance to the training of educators.

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Interest in a participative methodology which can be adapted as units to be used in distance education has been growing in the PICPEMCE Network. In September the ILPEC specialist, Sra. Cruz Prado will lead workshops sponsored by OREALC in the elaboration of materials with this methodological approach, in the Network's focal points in Santiago, Chile, and Quito, as well as one other in collaboration with the Argentine Association for Distance Education. Furthermore, during the same month the Group for the Training of Teachers for the Primary Level within the National Ministry of Education and Justice in Buenos Aires will hold a first seminar for theoretical discussion on

this methodology, to which a large number of educators who have tested this methodology have been invited. This Seminar, which is being held with support from OREALC, is of particular importance because the Group for Training is one of the most important nuclei involved in producing and developing materials using a participative approach.

Market studies on industrial products for the education sector will soon be completed. These have been carried out in the member countries of the Andres Bello Agreement in a collaborative effort by SECAB, OREALC and the German Technical Assistance – GTZ. These studies which took a new approach both in economic and educational terms, have aroused a great deal of interest among governments, the private sector and funding agencies. It is possible that a closing meeting will be held in Bogota in September to discuss the report summarizing the studies on the seven countries carried out by a Colombian consultancy company. Similar studies have also been started in Central America. The first two, on Costa Rica and Nicaragua, will be ready in a few months time. It is very likely that before the end of the present year the study will be continued, looking at other countries in the sub-region.

A Technical Consultation meeting, with the characteristics of a workshop, will be carried out with sponsorship from OREALC and in collaboration with the Institute for Nutrition of Central America and Panama –INCAP– in Guatemala City next October, for the purpose of bringing together a multi-disciplinary group to elaborate an inter-sectorial pilot project aimed at improving health, nutrition and physical performance, and directed towards sectors of the population in need, emphasizing female members. The pilot project should be based on a popular education approach and open up possibilities of participation by the beneficiaries themselves.

OREALC PUBLICATIONS

1. *Estudios sobre los contenidos de la educación primaria y su vinculación con el trabajo productivo en las áreas urbano-marginales.* Luis Verastegui, Vilma Ledesma, Santiago, 1985.

2. *Nuevos pasos hacia un currículo flexible.* Donald A. Lemke. Volumen I.

3. *Informe final.* Seminar on education and cultural policies and strategies for indigenous populations. Lima, Peru, November 13-19, 1985.

4. *Informe final.* Seminario inter-regional operacional sobre la pertinencia de la educación primaria en zonas de urbanización rápida. Santiago, Chile, 9-13 de diciembre, 1985.

5. *Final Report.* Inter-regional operational seminar on the relevance of primary education in areas of rapid urbanization. Santiago, Chile, December 9-13, 1985.

These documents are available from OREALC.

In order that this periodic publication may reflect in as complete and timely manner as possible the initiatives and activities carried out by each and all the countries of the region in relation to the Major Project in the Field of Education in the Latin America and Caribbean Region, pertinent official bodies are invited to send to the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean all information they wish to have published in this Bulletin.

Address: Enrique Delpiano 2058 (Plaza P. de Valdivia) Casilla 3187
Telex: 340258 Unesco CK - Telefono: 2235582 - Santiago de Chile

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